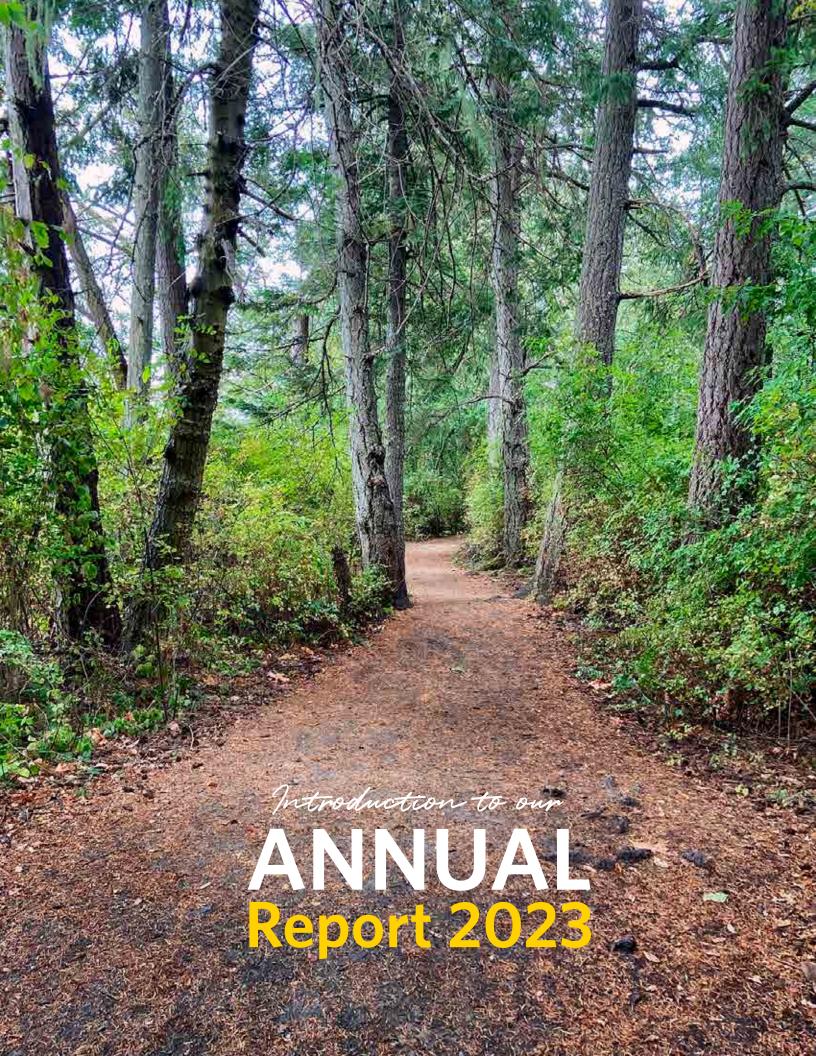


The District of Metchosin conducts its business on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish peoples. The District works to be increasingly mindful of its commitment to more inclusive governance with our neighbours, the Sc'ianew and T'Sou-ke First Nations with whom we are committed to building stronger working relationships.

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## Welcome to Metchosin

The District of Metchosin is a rural and farming community located on Southern Vancouver Island approximately sixteen kilometres (ten miles) southwest of downtown Victoria. Metchosin has approximately 5,067 residents (2021 census) and is neighbour to Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay) First Nation, the City of Colwood, City of Langford, District of Sooke, and Juan de Fuca Electoral Area.

From a regional perspective, Metchosin has several significant functions. It contains much of the productive agricultural land within the Capital Regional District which provides food for local markets. Metchosin provides opportunities for rural living on large residential lots and hobby farms. The unique and diverse natural environment with its strong marine orientation and numerous green spaces also provides significant regional recreational opportunities. Metchosin is a gateway to four regional parks, and contains multiple golf courses, schools, and a marina.



# Message from the Mayor

On behalf of the District of Metchosin Council, I am pleased to introduce the District's 2023 Annual Report. The report highlights the achievements of the last fiscal year and weighs options for the future. It is a comprehensive summary of the past year's accomplishments, challenges, and audited financial statements. As in other years, it includes a summary of the District of Metchosin's administration, finances, land use, fire protection services, emergency program, transportation, road maintenance, and the District's library, bylaw, and police services.

As the Mayor, I welcome the opportunity to lead the District of Metchosin and collaborate with my Council colleagues to work towards preserving and protecting our vibrant community and rural environment. We continue to foster old and forge new, positive relationships, and lines of communication with our neighbouring municipalities, communities, and First Nations as we understand the need for increased regional cooperation and partnerships.

Local governments depend on community talent working collaboratively. Metchosin, in this regard, has been very fortunate. Through the collaborative efforts of our volunteers and staff within the Fire Department, Emergency Program, and Public Works, we have developed innovative programs that help keep Metchosin residents informed and safe. These include our Emergency Communications Network, Neighbourhood POD Program, and residential Pre-Fire Planning. We are grateful for the dedicated community members who work for the betterment of the community. We recognize that our community continues to improve and grow due to the commitment and work of the people serving on advisory boards, working groups, societies, community organizations, and small volunteer collectives.

The 2022-2026 Metchosin Council is implementing and refining our Strategic Plan, charting the path forward for the next three years; it is a "living" document and, as such, subject to annual review and adjustment. The Strategic Plan focuses on four sustainability pillars: economic, environmental, social, and governance. The priorities include fiscal responsibility, environmental stewardship, a resilient and engaged community, and the priority to build an effective and stable organization. We acknowledge our dedicated municipal staff in carrying out this Council's priorities.

This year we have had key additions to our staff with a new permanent CAO, a legislative services assistant, development services coordinator and a public works operations worker. We warmly welcome them to our community.

I hope that you will find our 2023 Annual Report of interest. It provides an overview to understand Metchosin as a rural coastal community on the Southern tip of Vancouver Island and outlines our collective challenges and opportunities. I trust that 2024 will be a year of community collaboration, connection, and achievement, providing renewed enthusiasm and energy.

Marie-Térèse Little

Marie-Térèse Little Mayor



# Message from the Chief Administrative Officer

The 2023 Annual Report provides a review of the work completed over the past year towards achieving Council's goals within their Strategic Plan; the Metchosin Climate Action Plan, organizational priorities, long-term roads maintenance and infrastructure management plans, and development of new policies and bylaws.

I would like to express my gratitude to the former Interim CAO, Sue-Lin Tarnowski for her professional leadership and the District's accomplishments in 2023.

Metchosin has pursued and continues to advance a range of policies, programs, and planning decisions that further our environmental sustainability and community resilience to the impacts of climate change. While some of these actions and initiatives are led by the District of Metchosin, many are generated and advanced through collaboration with community partners that build from local and regional knowledge, skills, and capacity. As an example, this past year saw a new Agricultural Area Plan drafted to ensure that the community,: engages in practical solutions to external challenges, identifies opportunities that strengthen our agricultural sector, and contributes to the community's overall long-term sustainability.

While the Region continues to develop, grow, and change at a rapid pace, Metchosin remains steadfast and resolute in our holistic rural environment. Therefore, ongoing learning and improvement as a rural community remain key components of our culture in conjunction with providing outstanding community service. These core principles drive our employees to provide services in the most effective way, while continually adapting and progressing.

The Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program project was completed in 2023. This grant provided funding to renovate the remainder of the old school facilities thereby converting the space into a usable community center with a number of excellent recreation and cultural amenities for the community.

We are grateful to be working in partnership with Sc'ianew First Nation on important joint projects and remain committed to gaining the knowledge required of us to genuinely understand reconciliation and continue to strengthen our relationships.

Despite our challenging economic environment, with higher inflation and interest rates, and labour and supply shortages, the District ended the year in a strong financial position thanks to years of careful planning.

I invite you to read more and to contact me at <a href="mailto:bpayette@metchosin.ca">bpayette@metchosin.ca</a> with any questions or insights you might have. Looking ahead, I know the challenges we face are real and complex: affordability, housing, transportation, inclusivity, and climate change will continue to demand our collective attention and efforts in 2024 and beyond. I am committed to a focused approach on the issues that matter most to this community through both the strategic priorities Council has laid out for us and the supporting strategies we have developed collectively as a strong rural community.

Most importantly, I have immense appreciation to all of our staff, protective services, our dedicated Council, volunteers and to you, our community, for working together through 2023, to achieve so much.

**Bob Payette** 

Chief Administrative Officer



# **Municipal Council**

The District of Metchosin Council represents the citizens of the community and provides leadership by serving as the legislative and policy making body for the organization. The Municipal Council is comprised of a Mayor and four Councillors who are elected for a four-year term.

Council meetings are generally held at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers on the first and third Monday of each month and Council Standing Committee meetings are held on the second Monday of each month. Members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings or watch live-stream events through the District's meeting portal at <a href="https://www.metchosin.ca">www.metchosin.ca</a>.



#### Mayor Marie-Térèse Little

Elected as Mayor in October 2022 (Councillor 2018)

Mayor Little currently serves on the following Boards, Committees, and Commissions:

- CRD Board (Vice-Chair), CRD Hospital Board and CRD Housing Corporation.
- CRD Finance Committee.
- CRD Governance Committee (Chair).
- CRD First Nations Relations Committee.
- CRD Accessibility Committee.
- CRD Alliance to End Homelessness.
- CRD Planning & Protective Services Committee.
- South Island Reconciliation Advisory Committee.
- Greater Victoria Labour Relations Association Board.
- Victoria Regional Transit Commission.
- Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee (Chair).



#### **Councillor Shelly Donaldson**

Elected October 2022

Councillor Donaldson currently serves on the following Boards, Committees, and Commissions:

- Metchosin Finance Standing Committee (Chair).
- Metchosin Agricultural Advisory Select Committee (Council Liaison).
- CRD JDF Water Distribution Commission.
- CRD Water Supply (Alternate).
- CRD Regional Housing Trust Commission.
- Greater Victoria Public Library Board.
- West Shore Parks & Recreation Society Board.
- Metchosin Producers' Association (Council Liaison).
- ACCESS Westshore Society (Council Liaison),



## Councillor Sharie Epp

Elected October 2022 (Councillor 2018)

Councillor Epp currently serves on the following Boards, Committees, and Commissions:

- Metchosin Public Works and Protective Services Standing Committee (Chair).
- Metchosin Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee (Council Liaison).
- CRD Board (Alternate Director).
- CRD Arts Commission.
- Capital Region Emergency Services Telecommunications (CREST).
- West Shore RCMP Community Policing Advisory Committee.
- West Shore Parks & Recreation Society Board (Alternate).
- Metchosin Senior's Association, Metchosin School Site & Metchosin Hall Society (Council Liaison).



### **Councillor Steve Gray**

Elected October 2022

Councillor Gray currently serves on the following Boards, Committees, and Commissions:

- Metchosin Environment and Natural Areas Committee (Chair).
- Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee (Council Liaison).
- CRD Regional Water Supply Committee.
- CRD Climate Action Inter-Municipal Task Force.
- CRD JDF Water Distribution Commission (Alternate).
- Capital Regional Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP).
- Mary Hill Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) Steering Committee & Finance Subcommittee.



### **Councillor Jay Shukin**

Elected October 2022

Councillor Shukin currently serves on the following Boards, Committees, and Commissions:

- Metchosin Community Planning Committee (Chair).
- Metchosin Parks & Trails Advisory Committee (Council Liaison).
- Public Hearing Chair.
- Metchosin Arts & Cultural Association Liaison.
- Metchosin Day Committee (Council Liaison).
- Municipal Property and Grounds Group Liaison.
- Sc'ianew First Nation Liaison.
- West Shore Chamber of Commerce.
- GVLRA (Alternate).
- CRISP (Alternate).

# **Organizational Profile**

The Chief Administrative Officer leads a small team of dedicated employees and is responsible for providing recommendations and policy advice to Council and coordinating the day-to-day operations of the municipality.





## **District of Metchosin Council – 2024 Priorities**

Building on its 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, Metchosin's Mayor and Council have confirmed the following priorities for 2024. These are in addition to the normal course of business that Council and staff will undertake, such as preparing annual budgets, addressing land use matters, and meeting the requirements of the new provincial housing legislation.

Council looks forward to working with District staff, volunteers and community members in achieving these goals.

Support District administration in developing an effective management plan for the school, with the vision of the school as a thriving community-focused, multiuse arts and recreation centre.

- Council to confirm the guiding principles of use.
- Direction to Administration: Bring forward a management framework in 2024.
  - o Find a new commercial tenant.
  - Confirm lease arrangements with the Metchosin Preschool.
- Launch a naming process for the school; hold a naming ceremony.

#### Conduct a feasibility assessment for a new Fire Hall.

- Clarify the Steering Committee Terms of Reference.
- Direction to the Steering Committee and Administration: Complete the Feasibility Study by the end of 2024.
- Confirm the rationale for a new fire hall and options to meet needs.
- Obtain good information on the project scope, including uses (Fire Department, EOC, housing), footprint, and projected costs.

# Update bylaws that support environmental protection, a peaceful / liveable community, housing challenges, and those with revenue implications.

Bylaws to be addressed:

- Business Licence Bylaw, in relation to Short Term Vacation Rentals.
- Tree Management Bylaw / (Tree Preservation Bylaw).
- Bylaw Notice Enforcement Regulation.
- Fees and Charges Bylaw.
- · Building Bylaw.
- Subdivision Servicing Bylaw (particularly proof of water provisions).

#### In addition

- Address Professional Reliance in Bylaws and Policies (i.e., Qualified Environmental Professional, hydrologist, other experts).
- Examine legislative/administrative tools and costs to address unauthorized dwellings.

#### Strengthen bylaw enforcement.

- Priorities: environmental protection, minimizing neighbour impacts, housing matters.
- Direct staff to prepare for enforcement of non-compliant short-term vacation rentals.
- Look at additional legislative tools and processes to address unauthorized dwellings.

#### Obtain information for an informed decision on the future of the Buffer Land.

- Administration to respond to the Buffer Land Working Group's (BLWG's)
  recommendations, per Council direction of November 7, 2023, and/or other
  options conducive to community input received to date.
- Determine if external consultants are required to assess options for the Buffer Land.
- CAO to provide regular updates on the Buffer Land and on the continuing engagement with the City of Langford and the developers regarding the stormwater detention pond.

# Continue the work to protect our environment; support initiatives on biodiversity, water / watershed protection, shoreline and green space area protection.

- Launch development of Shoreline Protection Plan.
- Develop more information on strengthening riparian areas protection through education and regulation.
- Begin a water and watershed protection strategy (including groundwater).
- Assess additional steps to protect our green spaces.
- Engage the owners of tax-exempt properties on land protection strategies.
- Continue to assess options for orphaned parks and underused lands.

# Explore, support and be involved in opportunities to enhance agricultural, recreational, cultural, and community building activities.

- Complete Metchosin's first Agriculture Plan. Begin implementation.
- Launch the process of updating the District's Parks and Trails Master Plan, engaging Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee and community stakeholders.
- Pending receipt of a provincial grant, set priorities for an Active
   Transportation Plan, and support the launch of the planning process: hire
   consultants, confirm scope of work, schedule, public engagement plan, etc.
- Continue pursuing viable opportunities to create or re-establish trails (roadside or forested): Weir Beach, Duke Road, Hans Helgesen/Rocky Point, and other trails.
- Develop policies/processes to support large, open-air events on Metchosin's municipal grounds and school field.
  - o Review the fees for large events, with an emphasis on cost-recovery.
  - Develop a parking plan, event, and/or alcohol policy. Convene an internal working group to formalize the parking plan used at Metchosin Day, 2023.
- Define the criteria for specific volunteer awards. Clarify the selection process.
- Clarify the grant in aid process and criteria.

#### Enhance communication with residents.

- Increase "subscribers" to the District's email update service.
- Redesign the Metchosin Muse column.
- Develop a newsletter. Include in tax-notice mailing.





# **Progress on Council's Strategic Plan**

The Strategic Plan sets out Council's strategic priorities for at least the next three years (2023-2026). The Strategic Plan directs the organization's corporate planning and serves as a guide for decision-making for both Council and staff.

In addition, the Strategic Plan provides the community with a clear understanding of the goals, initiatives and actions to move Metchosin towards its future vision as outlined in the Official Community Plan (OCP).

The following highlights successes over the past year in implementing Council's Strategic Plan.



# **Economic Pillar** Fiscal Responsibility

- · Held a school visioning workshop for the Metchosin School site
- Received the following grants:
  - Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Community to Community Program to support reconciliation.
  - Ministry of Municipal Affairs Infrastructure Planning grant to support a fire hall feasibility study.
  - Six (6) UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) grants to support community emergency preparedness initiatives.
  - UBCM Community Resiliency Investment FireSmart Community Fund grant to support FireSmart initiatives and a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
  - UBCM Next Generation 911 Funding grant to support the implementation of the Next Generation 911 Program.
  - BC Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program to support the development of an Active Transportation Network Plan.



# **Environmental Pillar Practice Sound Environmental Stewardship**

- Adopted the District of Metchosin Climate Action Plan.
- Established the Buffer Land Working Group and completed a public engagement process on the future of the Buffer Land including completion of the "Buffer Land Working Group Recommendations Report".
- Approved a Major Stormwater Infrastructure Referral Policy.
- Endorsed the following Resolutions for the AVICC & UBCM Conventions:
  - o "Protection of Old Growth Forests".
  - o "Reducing Anchorages Outside the Port of Vancouver".
  - o "Supporting Biodiversity in Local Communities".
- Sent response letters to the provincial and federal governments regarding the following topics:
  - o Protection of Old Growth Forests.
  - Oil Tanker Traffic and Spill Response in Coastal Waters including Human Health Risks, Behaviour of Bitumen, Environmental Conditions and Existing Shorelines in relation to the issuance of Trans Mountain Environmental Assessment Certificates.
  - o A Coastal Marine Strategy for British Columbia Policy Intentions Paper.
- Endorsed the Zero Carbon Step Code through the Building Bylaw to help reduce GHG emissions in new residential construction.
- Conducted Invasive Species treatment and monitoring through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Capital Regional District (CRD).



# **Social Pillar**Be a Resilient, Inclusive and Engaged Community

- Conducted the "Metchosin Climate Action Plan Public Survey".
- Raised the "Pride Flag" at the Municipal Hall for annual "Pride Month" in June.
- Held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the completion of a new crosswalk on Rocky Point Road at Hans Helgesen School.
- Hosted a Volunteer Appreciation "outdoor concert" in appreciation of community volunteers.
- Held a series of public consultation/engagement activities on the development of an "Agricultural Plan" for Metchosin.
- Developed the draft "Metchosin Agricultural Area Plan".
- Established the joint Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee with member municipalities to work toward the development of an Accessibility Plan.
- Held 11 "Coffee with the Mayor" opportunities.



# Governance Pillar Build an Effective and Stable Organization

- Adopted the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.
- Adopted the District of Metchosin Respectful Workplace Policy.
- Introduced the District of Metchosin Council Code of Conduct Bylaw.
- Adopted the District of Metchosin Animal Control Bylaw.
- Introduced the District of Metchosin Good Neighbour Bylaw.
- Hired a permanent Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).



# **Council Advisory Bodies**

The District of Metchosin Advisory Bodies primarily function to inform the governance and decision-making process by providing input, advice, and recommendations to Council on matters related to their mandates or referred to them by Council.

Council and staff value the skills, expertise and contributions of our diverse Advisory Body volunteer members.

#### **Advisory Body 2023 Volunteer Members**

#### **Agricultural Advisory Select Committee**

- Robin Tunnicliffe (Chair)
- Councillor Shelly Donaldson (Council Liaison)
- John Buchanan
- Peter Chettleburgh
- Brent Donaldson
- Alex Fletcher
- Karen Hoffman
- Andrew Penn

#### **Board of Variance**

- Johnny Carline
- Lee Johnston
- Gary Smirfitt

#### **Buffer Land Working Group**

- Jay Shukin (Chair)
- Shelly Donaldson (Co-Chair)
- Bonnie Bouveur
- Anna Hall
- Brian Grant
- Karen Hoffman
- Richard Simpson
- Gary Smirfitt
- Bailey Spiteri

#### **Dogs in Metchosin Working Group**

- Pattie Whitehouse (Chair)
- Councillor Shelly Donaldson (Council Liaison)
- Monique Anstee
- Dominique Gagnon-Mosco
- Debra Pile
- Charmian Traverso

#### **Environmental Advisory Select Committee**

- Garry Fletcher, Chair
- Steve Gray (Council Liaison)
- Bill Cave
- Anna Hall
- Merrilee Hoen

- Andy MacKinnon
- Ric Perron
- Erin Van de Water

#### **Fire Hall Steering Committee**

- Mike Hornick (Chair)
- Councillor Shelly Donaldson (Council Liaison)
- Councillor Sharie Epp (Council Liaison)
- Johnny Carline
- Brent Donaldson
- Scott Henning
- Bruce McCall
- Steve Malkow
- Matt Priestley

#### **Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee**

- Shari Rourke (Chair)
- Councillor Sharie Epp (Council Liaison)
- Sarah Anthony
- Shannon Carman
- Jane Hammond
- Peter Havers
- Jim MacPherson
- Chris Pratt
- Ted White

#### Metchosin School Renovation Working Group

- Councillor Sharie Epp (Council Liaison)
- Johnny Carline
- Gary Smirfitt

#### Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee

- Mark Atherton (Chair)
- Jay Shukin (Council Liaison)
- Ron Aubrey
- Ryan Carter (Trails Coordinator)
- Fllen Dewar
- Karen Hoffman
- Lee Johnston
- Jim Nan
- Gord Stodola

## **Council Advisory Committees**

#### **Agricultural Advisory Select Committee (AASC)**

The AASC considers and provides information on matters to Council related to agriculture and promotes awareness and education on agriculture in the community. The Committee assists in the development of a Plan to sustain agricultural within Metchosin.

In 2023, the Committee met five times to consider agricultural matters including:

- Canada Geese impacts on agriculture.
- Invasive rabbits in Metchosin.
- "Metchosin Grown" Map.
- Building Permits in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- Proposed amendments to the Land Use Bylaw to protect Agricultural Land.
- · Promoting farming in Metchosin.
- · FireSmart for Agriculture.
- Metchosin Farm Forum.

In addition, the Committee reviewed and made recommendations on one rezoning application within the ALR.

Most notably, in 2023, the Committee worked in collaboration with Upland Agricultural Consulting on the development of an Agricultural Plan for Metchosin. Public engagement on the Plan began in October 2023 with stakeholders and the community and continued into 2024. The Agricultural Plan will serve as a guide for the District and agricultural sector in making decisions and implementing projects relevant to agriculture in Metchosin.

#### **Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee (HCASC)**

The HCASC assists Council by supporting community activities that pursue improvements in all aspects of living in Metchosin which reflect health, well-being and happiness while strengthening a sense of community.

In 2023, the Committee met six times and provided recommendations to Council on the following matters:

- Poverty reduction action planning.
- Health and safety training for the community.
- Dark Sky Communities.

The Committee, in conjunction with the Fire Chief, began to gather information to use toward the development of a local Poverty Reduction Plan to support people in the community living in poverty.

The Committee has worked with the Fire Chief in establishing public education and training sessions to increase health and safety in the community. A workshop was held in the Fall of 2023 on the safe administration of naloxone. Future workshops are planned to increase awareness around homelessness and mental health related issues.

#### Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee (MEASC)

The MEASC considers environmental matters and reports its findings and opinions to Council.

The Committee had an active year in 2023 investigating environmental priorities for the District. MEASC hosted an open house and otherwise advised on the development of Metchosin's Climate Action Plan. In follow-up, the Committee recommended that the District adopt the Zero Carbon Step Code (ZCSC). MEASC also proposed that Metchosin initiate advocacy through the UBCM for a provincial biodiversity fund to protect local areas.

On land use and environmental protection, the Committee provided important input on several rezoning and subdivision applications. MEASC also contributed advice on the protection of the Bilston Creek watershed in relation to stormwater management planning.

With the assistance of local experts, MEASC drafted responses to three provincial environmental assessment inquiries related to potential offshore oil spills. Consequently, the Committee recommended Council urge both the provincial and federal governments to limit the transit of oil takers along our shoreline at times when it is not safe for spill response to be launched due to adverse wind and tides. In this regard, the Committee also engaged with Sc'ianew Nation Ocean Resources Centre to identify particularly sensitive shorelines.

Other recommendations to Council in 2023 included matters related to:

- Protecting BC's old growth forests.
- Reducing freighter anchorages off our shores.
- Holding fossil fuel corporations accountable for their fair share of local climate costs.
- Enhanced Riparian Area Protection.
- The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- Human Wildlife-Conflict Prevention Strategies.
- Invasive species including Metchosin's Bullfrog Management Program.



#### Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee (PTASC)

The PTASC considers parks, trails and recreation matters and reports its findings and opinions to Council. The Committee met five times in 2023 and made recommendations to Council related to the following:

- Parks Donation Program applications for Sea Bluff Trail and Duke Road.
- Updates to the Parks Donation Program Guidelines for Staff.
- Provided input on the stormwater detention pond within the Buffer Land.
- Assessed options for the replacement of Weir Beach Stairs.
- Duke Road East Roadside Trail Feasibility Assessment.

As part of the District's Parks Donation Program, Committee members continued to provide maintenance to existing memorial benches within the community.

The Committee reviewed four subdivision applications in 2023 and made recommendations to the Approving Officer on parkland and trail dedication opportunities related to the proposed subdivisions.

Members explored new trail opportunities in several areas of Metchosin and continued their well-established tradition of hands on involvement within the District's parks and trails system whether in clearing fallen trees, removing invasive species and taking steps to improve places where community members go to enjoy the wonderful place in which we live.



# **Other Advisory Bodies**

#### **Board of Variance**

The Local Government Act requires a municipality that has enacted a zoning bylaw to establish a Board of Variance. The District of Metchosin Board of Variance consists of three persons appointed by Council.

The Board makes decisions on applications for minor development variances where compliance with land use regulations would cause undue hardship to the applicant. The focus is primarily on hardship relating to matters such as location, dimension and size of buildings.

There were no applications reviewed by the District's Board of Variance in 2023.

#### **Buffer Land Working Group**

The Buffer Land Working Group was established to identify and evaluate options for the future management of the Buffer Land, keeping in mind the concept of the Buffer Land being a "greenspace buffer," as presented in the 2017 referendum related to the District of Metchosin boundary adjustment.

The Working Group met a total of nine times in 2023 and held two community input sessions accomplishing its goal of delivering a Recommendations Report to Council within six months of its first meeting. The Working Group's efforts were a positive example of a process that was collaborative, considered community views, and resulted in realistic well-thought out recommendations to Council.

#### **Dogs in Metchosin Working Group**

The Dogs in Metchosin Working Group was initially established in 2020 to identify issues in the community related to dogs in public spaces and to make recommendations on steps the District could take to help resolve these issues. The Group continued its work by conducting an educational campaign in the Summer and Fall of 2023 educating residents and visitors to the community on what is expected of them with respect to exercising control over their dogs. The Group worked with staff on finalizing the new District of Metchosin *Animal Control Bylaw 2023, No. 692* which was adopted October 2023.

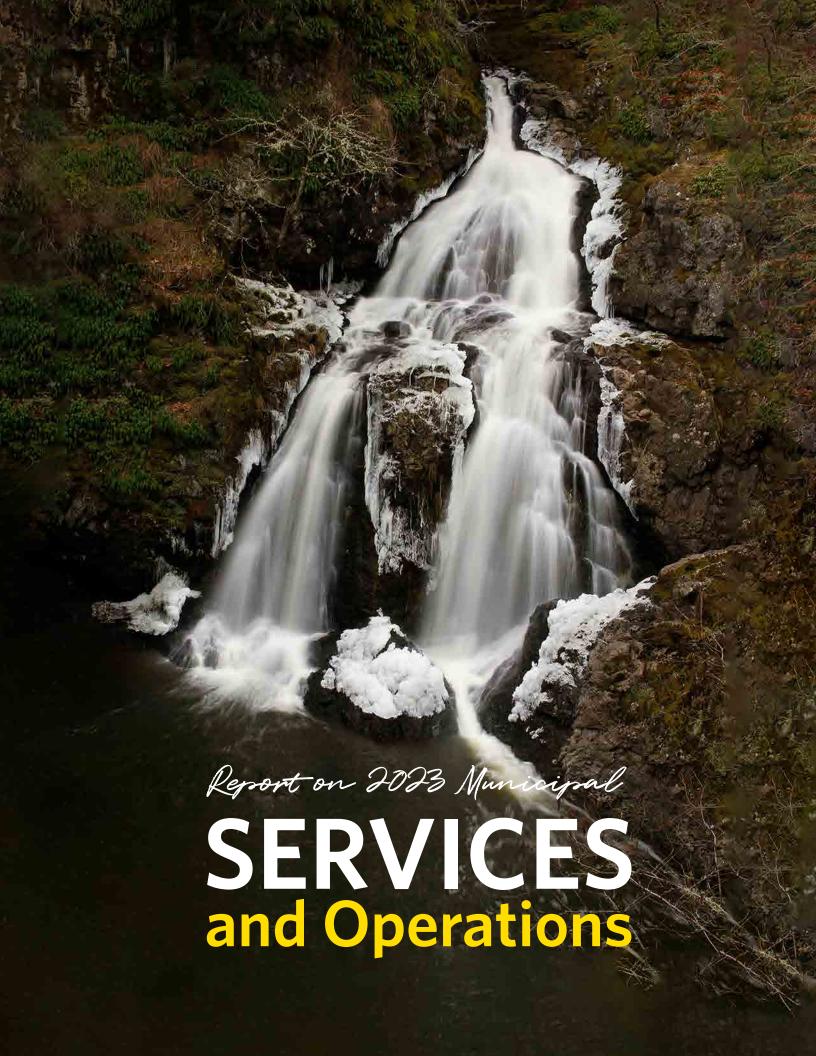
#### **Fire Hall Steering Committee**

The Fire Hall Steering Committee advises Council on various issues as the fire hall project moves through the concept, needs, design, and building stages. The Committee held two meetings in 2023 and provided recommendations to Council related to a request for proposal (RFP) for a feasibility study on improvements to the fire hall and an affordable housing proposal in conjunction with a new fire hall.

### Metchosin School Renovation Working Group (SRWG)

The SRWG was established to provide advice to Council on the Community Wellness Infrastructure Project through the province's Investing in Infrastructure Program to renovate portions of Metchosin School. The Group worked in conjunction with staff on the project and renovations were completed at the end of 2023.







# **General Government Summary**

2023 was a busy first year of Council's term in office. Early in the year, Council worked to develop their four year Strategic Plan which they subsequently adopted in May 2023. The Plan supports sustainability in four key areas of economic development, environmental, social, and governance. The Plan is a road map to help guide the District's actions in supporting the community's priorities and vision for the future.

In June, Council approved the District of Metchosin Climate Action Plan to enhance community resilience and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The climate action strategies align with the community's rural and agricultural character, and are grounded in Metchosin's abundant natural ecosystems.

Council allocated funding in the 2023-2027 Five Year Financial Plan for the development of an Agricultural Plan. The Agricultural Plan will provide the District with opportunities to seek funding that will support farming and agriculture in the community.

Several bylaws were adopted in 2023, including the Financial Plan and Tax Rate bylaws, the 2023 Heritage and Permissive Exemption bylaws, and a new Animal Control bylaw. Council also approved various policies including the Respectful Workplace Policy, Council Gift Policy, and a Major Stormwater Infrastructure Referral Policy. Council also considered several land use applications including development permits, development variance permits and rezoning.

In June 2023, in celebration of Pride Month, the Pride Flag was raised at the municipal hall for the first time. Council, staff and Fire Department volunteers were joined by representatives from the West Shore RCMP and members of the community to celebrate the raising of the Pride Flag.

The Plan supports
sustainability in four
key areas of economic
development, environmental,
social and governance

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held in August to celebrate a new crosswalk installed at Hans Helgesen Elementary School. The ceremony was attended by Sc'ianew Chief and Council, MLA Mitzi Dean, MLA Ravi Parmar, and representatives from the provincial government, Island Health, and School District No. 62. The new crosswalk was funded through a Vision Zero grant and will make Metchosin roads safer for students and residents in the community.

In appreciation of our community volunteers, Council hosted a volunteer appreciation night "outdoor concert" in August in recognition of the tremendous efforts of the many volunteers in Metchosin.

The District of Metchosin Council has made a strong commitment to providing opportunities for public engagement. Public participation and question period continue to provide opportunity for input during Council and Committee meetings. Each month, the community has been invited to tea to meet, in an informal setting, with the Mayor and Acting Mayors to discuss current issues in the community. Council continues to work with our neighbouring First Nations and municipalities to ensure good communications and to continue fostering positive relationships.





## **Administration**

Administration is led by the CAO, who is responsible for the corporate leadership of municipal operations, implementing Council's strategic priorities and providing policy advice to Council.

The Department ensures that all municipal statutory requirements are adhered to and promotes accountability and transparency in municipal processes. Administration provides support to the CAO, Mayor and Council, and Committees and plays a key role in advancing municipal objectives.

In addition, Administration is responsible for coordinating all meetings of Council including preparation of agendas and minutes, maintaining District bylaws and policies, administering leases and agreements, overseeing records management, updating the municipal website, coordinating events, administering elections, and processing Freedom of Information requests.

There was a total of 132 meetings held in 2023 which included 36 Advisory Select Committee meetings, 54 Standing Committee meetings and 42 Council meetings. Staff coordinated events including the Hans Helgesen School crosswalk ribbon cutting ceremony, 11 Coffee with the Mayor meetings, and bookings for Metchosin Community Day.

#### 2023 Highlights

- Held a training session on the Respectful Workplace Policy.
- Supported Council in the development of Council's Strategic Plan.
- Organized a "visioning" workshop for Metchosin School.
- Began implementation of the Accessible BC Act requirements through the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- Coordinated Council attendance to Conferences.
- Facilitated a Westshore municipalities "Bylaw Enforcement Best Practices Workshop" with the Office of the Ombudsperson.
- Compiled the 2022 Annual Municipal Report.

There was a total of 132 meetings held in 2023

#### 2024 Objectives

- Develop a Management Plan for Metchosin School
- Arrange a naming ceremony for Metchosin School
- Finalize the development of an Accessibility Plan
- Set up a new phone system for the Municipal Hall
- Install a new sound system in the Council Chambers
- Implement TEAMS video integration for Council meetings
- Oversee records management project to convert microfiche records to digital format
- Organize installation of "Period Promise" dispensers and products in District facilities

#### Freedom of Information Requests

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act") requires all public bodies to be accountable by providing the public the right to access records that are in the custody or control of a public body. In 2023, the District of Metchosin received a total of eleven (11) requests under the Act. The majority of requests received were for property-related information.

Freedom of Information Requests					
Year	Number of Requests	OIPC* Reviews			
2023	11	1			
2022	9	0			
2021	16	0			
2020	10	0			
2019	9	1			

<sup>\*</sup> Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

The Finance Department is responsible for the financial well-being of the District, including long-term financial planning, annual budget development, and administration of property taxes. The Department is also responsible for investment and debt management, procurement, general accounting, and all financial reporting including preparation of the District's audited Financial Statements.

The Department oversees accounts payable and accounts receivable, business licences, grants-in-aid, and provides the administration of payroll and benefit programs for all staff.

2023 Highlights

- Coordinated the UBCM Community to Community event with Metchosin and Sc'ianew Councils to support reconciliation.
- Provided quarterly financial reports to Council.
- Issued the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Design-Build Renovations for Metchosin School.
- Completed the annual municipal audit through KPMG.

#### 2024 Objectives

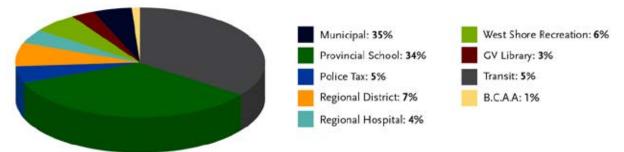
- Implement new budget software.
- Coordinate fiscal revenue for Metchosin School through lease agreements and user fees.
- Complete a comprehensive Asset Management Plan.

#### **Budgets and Property Tax Rates**

Year	Value of Average Household	Average Residential Taxes (Municipal)	Residential Tax Rate	Tax Increase (Municipal)	Total Budget
2023	\$1,288,455	\$1,336.54	1.0412	10.3%	\$8,175,642
2022	\$1,156,053	\$1,211.54	1.0480	5.9%	\$8,452,493
2021	\$867,353	\$1,139.79	1.3141	2.2%	\$7,611,132
2020	\$779,054	\$1,095.43	1.4061	4.9%	\$6,547,658
2019	\$729,976	\$1,036.72	1.2969	3.5%	\$6,385,617

#### Where Do Your Tax Dollars Go?

The graph below shows the breakdown of the gross property taxes between the District of Metchosin and other taxing authorities for the average residential single family property in 2023.



The table below shows the 2023 taxes payable to all taxing authorities for the average Metchosin single family residence, which is valued at \$1,288.455. The exact amount of taxes payable for your property depends on its assessed value as determined by BC Assessment Authority.

2023 Taxes For Average Single Family Residence

	2023	2022	\$ Increase	%	% Increase		
Average Assessed Value	1,288,455	1,156,053	132,402	11.5	11.5		
Taxes set by Metchosin		•		,			
Municipal Taxes	1,336.54	1,211.54	125.00	10.3	10.3		
Police Tax	199.71	164.80	34.91	21.2	21.2		
West Shore Recreation	213.65	213.44	0.21	0.1	0.1		
GV Library	110.03	109.61	0.42	0.4	0.4		
Total Metchosin	1,859.93	1,699.39	160.54	9.4			
Other Authorities							
Provincial School Tax	1,427.09	1,335.70	91.39	6.8	6.8		
Capital Regional District	286.81	270.75	16.06	5.9	5.9		
Regional Hospital	161.83	163.12	(1.29)	-0.8	-0.8		
Transit	225.22	186.82	38.40	20.6	20.6		
BC Assessment	43.29	40.35	2.94	7.3	7.3		
Municipal Finance Authority	0.26	0.23	0.03	13.0	13.0		
<b>Total Other Authorities</b>	2,144.50	1,996.97	147.53	7.4	7.4		
Total Typical House	4,004.43	3,696.36	308.07	8.3	8.3		
Less Basic Home Owner Grant	(570.00)	(570.00)	<del>-</del>		_		
Total Net (Under 65)	3,434.43	3,126.36	308.07	9.9%	9.9%		

#### 2023 Grant-in-Aid Program

Council approved a total of 5,000 in grant-in-aid funding in 2023 to the following non-profit organizations:

Organization	2023 Grant In Aid Amount
Capital Bike	\$500
Inter-municipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (IACDI)	\$250
Juan de Fuca Performing Arts Centre Society	\$300
Metchosin Museum Society	\$800
Metchosin Preschool Society	\$1,500
Prince Edward (Pacific No. 91) Branch The Royal Canadian Legion	\$350
Vancouver Island South Film & Media Commission	\$1,300
Total	\$5,000





# Land Use, Planning & Environmental Services

Comprised of staff that includes one contract Planner (7-14 hours per week), one contract Engineer (seven hours per week), one full-time Building Inspector/Public Work Supervisor, and one full-time Development Services Coordinator, this multi departmental group provides environmental planning and stewardship, municipal infrastructure, roads, long range and current land use planning, review of development applications, tree management, blasting approvals, soil removal and soil deposit approvals, building construction approvals and inspections.

#### 2023 Highlights

The District of Metchosin finalized its first Climate Action Plan in June of 2023. Early in the year, in response to Council declaring a climate emergency, the scope of this project was expanded to include Climate Mitigation and Adaptation. Staff was involved with public engagement through a survey, as well as a Council workshop. Refinements to the draft were incorporated, and a final plan was presented to and approved by Council. Implementation of the Climate Action Plan will be an important part of upcoming annual work plans.

Staff introduced a report regarding the Zero Carbon Step Code (ZCSC), seeking direction on whether the District wanted to accelerate implementation of the code. Council decided to proceed with building bylaw amendments to enact the ZCSC to help reduce GHG emissions from new residential construction.

Updated development application fees were proposed and endorsed in 2023. Current application fees had been identified as substantially low when compared with neighbouring and/or similarly sized communities in the region. Changes to the fees and charges bylaw will occur in the upcoming year and will help to offset costs associated with processing applications.

The District of
Metchosin finalized
its first Climate Action
Plan in June of 2023

The Department was also focussed on learning about and determining the implications of several new pieces of provincial legislation related to the BC Homes for People Action Plan, with particular focus on Bill 35 Short Term Rental Accommodations Act, and Bill 44 Small Scale Multi Unit Housing. Policy Manuals were distributed by the province at the end of the year, with specific follow up action items to occur in 2024-2025.

Regionally, staff have been involved in supporting the Home Energy Navigator Tool Kit, active transportation, climate action and stormwater management. The Department also continued to collaborate with neighbouring jurisdictions in the shared effort to conserve the rural character and sensitive ecological features in the Buffer Lands.

Staff have been actively working on streamlining the development application processes internally by identifying redundancies and creating manuals for each development application type. Application forms are being updated to reflect current language and legislative requirements, and will be available for download on the District's website once finalized.

The Planning/Subdivision Department continued to process applications, including five development variance permits, two subdivision applications, three rezoning/OCP amendments, and one Agricultural Land Reserve application. A notable number of new rezoning and official community plan amendment applications were submitted in 2023, plus a carry-over from 2022 which resulted in a substantial amount of staff time in report writing, analysis, referral requests, applicant meetings and correspondence, and bylaw preparation. There also continued to be a significant number of development variance permit requests in 2023.

The Department also supports district-wide initiatives through corporate strategic planning, processing of Freedom of Information requests, bylaw enforcement, support for business licenses, and daycare and sign permits throughout the year. Customer service remains an integral part of the Department's function, with responses to numerous citizen inquiries each week.

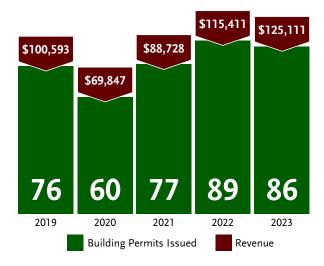
Staff have been actively working on streamlining the development application processes

#### **Applications**

Year	Rez /OCP	Temporary Use Permit	Dev Permit	Dev Variance Permit	Board of Variance	Subd	ALR
2023	3	O	0	5	0	2	1
2022	1	1	2	8	2	5	1
2021	5	0	2	3	0	2	1
2020	0	0	2	7	0	5	0
2019	1	2	6	0	1	2	1

# **Building Services**

The Building Department approved and issued 86 new permits in 2023. Permits are issued, and inspections are conducted for health and safety, ensuring that construction in Metchosin complies with the BC Building Code and municipal bylaws. The Department authorizes permits for building construction, plumbing installations, wood stoves, fireplaces, as well as assigning addresses for new homes. The service continues to operate on a cost recovery basis – of the 86 building permits issued in 2023, a total of \$125,111 was received in permit revenue.



In addition to the review and issuance of new permits, there are also approximately 150 open building permit files, with one third of those being inactive since 2021 or earlier. These older files require ongoing review and action from staff to determine next steps.

Work continued on the update of the Metchosin Building Bylaw, to bring procedures and fees in line with CRD municipalities. The new bylaw is anticipated to be considered by Council in 2024.

In 2023, the Building Inspector conducted approximately 400 – 450 on-site building inspections and assisted with bylaw complaints related to both building and other land use matters. The Department also supports the approvals and inspections for permits related to blasting, tree removal, road access, soil deposit, and soil removal.



## **Transportation & Road Maintenance**

The District of Metchosin Public Works Department consists of three full-time employees who are responsible for approximately 180 lane kilometers of roads within the municipality. The Department provides road maintenance, including maintenance of culverts and ditches and installation and maintenance of street signs.

The Department conducts annual mowing and brushing of roadside vegetation, maintains roadside trails and responds to storm damage and dangerous or fallen trees and branches. In 2023, the Department responded to a total of 170 calls related to roads maintenance and services.

The crew is also responsible for maintenance of the municipal hall and grounds including upkeep of the Metchosin school grounds. Service and maintenance of the Public Works vehicle fleet and equipment is performed by the crew.

New crosswalks were installed on Rocky Point Road at Hans Helgesen School and at Rocky Point and Kangaroo Roads at the Galloping Goose Trail. The crosswalk included a solar powered traffic warning device for the pedestrian crossing.

Public Works continued to provide efficient snow and ice removal during snowfall events that occurred in December 2023.

### 2023 Highlights

- Installed new crosswalks at Hans Helgesen School on Rocky Point Road and at Rocky Point and Kangaroo Roads at the Galloping Goose pedestrian crossing.
- Upgraded all warning signs on major roads to current Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) standards.
- Completed crack seal and patching of all roads in need.
- Repaired upper landing of Witty Beach stairs.
- Installed and maintained solar powered traffic control warning devices.

New crosswalks were installed on Rocky Point Road at Hans Helgesen School and at Rocky Point and Kangaroo Roads at the Galloping Goose Trail

### **2024 Objectives**

- Assist with the development of a Roads & Culverts Management Plan.
- Install solar powered traffic control warning device and crosswalk on Rocky
   Point Road at the Galloping Goose crossing near Matheson Lake Park.
- Install recessed pavement markers where possible.
- Install gate on the Buffer Lands.
- Conduct crack seal and patching on all roads in need.
- Install additional warning and speed zone signs.
- Purchase five-ton dump truck.
- Purchase max-lift crane for one-ton truck.
- Coordinate and assist with the Weir Beach stair access on William Head Road.
- Complete Municipal hall parking lot improvements to pavement and lighting.

## **Public Communication Requests for Road Maintenance and Services**

Year	Roads	Plowing/ mowing	Signs	Highway Admin	Misc.	Garbage	Carcass Removal	Trees/ Branches*
2023	71	2	12	0	9	14	23	39
2022	85	8	14	0	9	22	18	45
2021	85	3	10	1	13	25	36	50
2020	82	9	10	1	8	43	27	42
2019	139	6	18	0	21	26	38	

 $<sup>\</sup>mbox{\ensuremath{^{*}}}$  Trees and branches were added as a new category in 2020. Trees and branches were previously grouped into Roads or Miscellaneous.



# **Bylaw & Animal Care Services**

The District of Metchosin provides bylaw enforcement services on a complaint-driven basis. Bylaw complaints are forwarded to the Chief Administrative Officer and CRD Bylaw to investigate according to the District's Bylaw Enforcement Policy. All complaints are addressed in a fair, transparent, and confidential manner with citizen well-being, health and safety, and the protection of the environment as primary considerations.

## **Complaints Received**

Year	Land Use	Building Bylaw	Tree Cutting	Misc. (Soil & Blasting)	Noise
2023	40	4	1	16	7
2022	40	8	1	9	11
2021	56	6	3	6	4
2020	48	7	1	3	12
2019	39	3	3	10	11

## **CRD Contracted Services**

Year	Contracted Services Costs	Soil Bylaw (hours)	Land Use Bylaw (hours)	Noise Bylaw (hours)	Unsightly Premises (hours)	Fine Revenue
2023	\$38,443.65	29.50	180.00	17.50	39.00	\$500.00
2022	\$24,221.93	39.50	150.50	16.50	18.50	\$500.00
2021	\$23,689.58	30.00	128.75	26.75	16.25	\$1,150.00
2020	\$30,414.39	79.25	83.50	57.00	49.25	\$3,565.00
2019	\$26,997.72	146.50	58	42.75	15.00	\$70.00

## **Animal Control Services**

Animal Control services are contracted to the CRD Bylaw and Animal Care Services. Fine revenue is collected by the CRD in lieu of payment for services.

Year	Bylaw Hours	Fine Revenue	Impounds	Tickets/Warnings
2023	229.00	\$78.00	8	26
2022	246.00	\$516.00	13	20
2021	418.00	\$291.00	15	32
2020	462.00	\$652.00	19	30
2019	331.75	\$435.00	24	19



## Fire Department & Emergency Program

As we reflect on the events and accomplishments of the past year, the Metchosin Fire Department is proud to present the Fire and Emergency Response Services for the 2023 Annual Report. Despite facing various challenges, our dedicated firefighters and staff have remained committed to serving the community with excellence and professionalism. This report will explore our accomplishments, initiatives, and ongoing work to safeguard the safety and well-being of Metchosin residents.

#### **Call Response:**

In 2023, the Metchosin Fire Department responded to a total of 713 incidents. These included medical emergencies, motor vehicle incidents, fires, and other emergencies. Each call required a prompt and effective response from our firefighters, who demonstrated exceptional skill, bravery, and dedication in their duties ensuring the safety and well-being of the community. The breakdown of call statistics is as follows:

Medical: 448

Motor Vehicle Incidents: 56

Fires: 81Other: 128

...Our dedicated firefighters and staff have remained committed to serving the community with excellence and professionalism

#### **Personnel Statistics:**

The Metchosin Fire Department values its personnel and recognizes the importance of staffing statistics. Understanding the demographics and trends within our team helps us better plan for the future and ensures that we maintain a strong and capable workforce. The following statistics provide insights into our personnel composition and turnover rates:

- Between 2019-2024, the average time served by personnel is six years prior to retirement.
- Approximately 13% of personnel retire each year, with an average of five retirements annually.
- The median age of personnel in 2024 is 31, indicating a relatively young workforce.
- 51% of the roster has been with the Department for under two years, while 41% have served between 3-9 years.
- 8% of staff have been with the Department for over ten years, demonstrating a commitment to long-term service.
- Since 2019, twenty-five personnel have left the Department for various reasons, with the majority leaving for fire service jobs, relocation, or personal reasons.
- 51% of the current roster reside within Metchosin boundaries, reflecting a strong connection to the community.
- 16% of the current roster own a house in Metchosin, indicating a significant investment in the community.

Understanding these statistics allows us to identify trends, address challenges, and plan for succession within the Department.



#### **Grants Received in 2023:**

The Metchosin Fire Department is grateful for the grants received in 2023, which have enabled us to enhance our capabilities and services. These grants have played a crucial role in supporting our ongoing initiatives and improving community safety. The grants received in 2023 include:

- Fire Department Equipment: \$30,000
- Disaster Risk Reduction Climate Adaptation: \$40,000
- Poverty Reduction: \$25,000
- Emergency Operations Centre: \$30,000
- Emergency Support Services: \$30,000
- Next Generation 911: \$45,000
- Indigenous Emergency Connection & Planning: \$45,000
- FireSmart: \$200,000
- Emergency Notification: \$30,000

These grants have been instrumental in funding equipment purchases, training programs, community outreach efforts, and infrastructure upgrades. We are deeply appreciative of the support provided by government agencies, organizations, and partners in securing these grants.

#### **Training:**

Our Training Program remains a cornerstone of our Department's success. In 2023, members attended an average of 40 out of a possible 49 practices, demonstrating their dedication to ongoing skill development. The Department continues to prioritize training to ensure that all members are prepared to handle the diverse challenges they may encounter in the field. Our training programs are continuously monitored, evaluated, and adjusted to ensure they remain relevant and effective. Safety is always our top priority, and all training activities are conducted in accordance with established protocols and best practices.

Members participated in additional training courses, which have been well attended and highly beneficial. These courses are offered as regional training events and engage collaboration with firefighters from around the Island. The engagement and enthusiasm of our members in training activities have been commendable, and it is reflected in our performance on the fire ground. Many of the training evolutions are being instructed by local fire Officers and senior firefighters, fostering strong Officer/Firefighter relationships, and enhancing overall morale within the Department.

Our Training
Program remains
a cornerstone of
our Department's
success

Weekend courses are attended over and above the regular weekly training. These programs include:

- Over 240 hours per person for recruit training both instructors and participants.
- Emergency Scene Management 1 & 2.
- Fire Service Instructor 1 & 2.
- BC Wildfire Service Task Force Leader, Sprinkler Protection & Forestry Firefighter.
- Electric Vehicle Response & Safety.
- Elevator Rescue.
- Live Fire 1 & 2.
- Rope Awareness & Operations Level.
- Hazardous Materials Awareness & Operations Level.
- First Responder 60 hours per student.
- First Responder Instructor Course.

The Department remains committed to training all members to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001 Level 2 and all Officers to NFPA 1021 Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4. We continue to provide 'Full Service' fire services to our community, ensuring our members are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to respond effectively to emergencies of all types.

Our Officer structure consists of two Chief Officers, two Captains, and six Lieutenants. In addition, we have a dedicated Safety Officer who oversees all aspects of safety and ensures compliance with our Occupational Health and Safety Program. This robust leadership structure ensures that we have capable leaders to fulfil critical roles both on and off the fire ground, maintaining an optimal Officer/Firefighter ratio.

#### **Equipment, Apparatus, and Building:**

Our Department's equipment, apparatus, and facilities are critical to our ability to effectively respond to emergencies and protect the community. We prioritize preventative maintenance to ensure that all equipment remains in good working order and that our facilities meet current standards. In 2023, we continued our annual preventative maintenance program, which has proven to be highly effective in keeping our equipment and vehicles in top condition.

All emergency response vehicles are in good working condition, and, with the addition of the new Type 1/3 Engine in 2023, we have a beautiful, well-equipped fleet to meet the needs of our municipality. Our equipment, including self-contained breathing apparatus, compressors, generators, extrication equipment, firefighting equipment, rescue equipment, power tools, and hand tools, remains in good working order.

Our Officer structure consists of two Chief Officers, two Captains, and six Lieutenants

We recognize that some equipment, such as auto extrication equipment, will require upgrading or replacement in the next year or two, as outlined in our Capital Equipment Plan. We continue to prioritize the safety and effectiveness of our equipment and facilities, ensuring that we have the resources necessary to fulfil our mission.

We also continue to press forward on the Fire Hall Replacement Feasibility Study and hope to have that completed sometime in 2024. This study will provide valuable insights into the condition of our current facilities and identify options for potential replacement or renovation to better meet the needs of our Department and the community.

#### **Fire Prevention Activities:**

The volunteers and staff at the Metchosin Fire Department remain actively involved in the community, promoting safety and awareness through various initiatives. They conduct activities in schools, lead preschool tours, engage with the public through social media, and carry out inspections. The standout achievement is hosting a regional Fire Safety Expo for grade four students, attracting over 900 attendees in 2023.

Our annual community events remain a major attraction, drawing large crowds year after year. Among the favourites are Breakfast with Santa, Halloween festivities, the March for Liz, our Bike Program, and Remembrance Day ceremonies. These are just a few of the highlights.

All emergency response vehicles are in good working condition

### **Deployments:**

2023 was an active fire deployment year that started in May and ended in August.

In total we had crews out for a total of 117 days and deployed to various fires throughout BC including Donnie Creek Fire, Burns Lake, Tumbler Ridge, Sparwood and Adams Lake. In total we invoiced the province for \$642,311 and \$255,872 was disbursed back to the firefighters for their hours, and over \$313,000 went to the District as surplus.

These deployments offer members valuable real-world experience and training while fostering camaraderie and leadership skills. They gain hands-on practice with engine pump operations and acquire forestry tactics expertise.

The Metchosin Fire Department remains steadfast in its mission to protect and serve the community. We extend our gratitude to our personnel, volunteers, partners, and the community for their ongoing support. Together, we will continue to work tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of the residents of Metchosin. Thank you for your continued trust and confidence in our Department.

The Metchosin Fire
Department remains
steadfast in its mission
to protect and serve the
community



#### **Emergency Operations Centre (EOC):**

In ongoing efforts to enhance emergency response capabilities, the Metchosin Emergency Program has achieved significant advancements through leveraging provincial grants. We have augmented our resources with additional equipment, including a mobile Emergency Operations Centre trailer, laptops, and state-of-the-art portable response technology. Our quarterly municipal stakeholder meetings have been crucial in fostering collaboration among local organizations, ensuring alignment in support and response priorities. Additionally, our Emergency Operations Group convenes monthly to coordinate programs and refine response protocols.

A notable accomplishment includes the execution of a municipal-wide emergency notification exercise and collaboration with Emergency Support Services to establish a Reception Centre, thereby increasing public awareness and preparedness. During major emergencies or disasters, EOC staff will oversee resource management, plan for future operational needs, coordinate with other agencies, and maintain meticulous records of expenses, documentation, and agreements.

In 2023, the EOC Management team made significant progress through cross-training initiatives and emergency drills, updating equipment and resources via grant funding, and rigorously testing emergency protocols. We have also appointed a training coordinator to develop policies, set training standards, and create operational guidelines.

#### **Emergency Communications (EmCom):**

The Metchosin Emergency Communications Group continues to lead with excellence in innovation, training, and community outreach. In 2023, our volunteers logged over 430 hours in weekly check-ins, transmitting over 1,000 messages, showcasing our proficiency and dedication. The acquisition and installation of state-of-the-art HF radio equipment, funded by provincial grants, signify our commitment to technological advancement. With 47 Point of Distribution (POD) radio operators and over 100 licensed responders within the municipality, our reach extends deep into the community. Looking ahead, our goals for 2024 include refining operational guidelines, formalizing competency documents, and upgrading equipment to further enhance stability and communication reliability.

Metchosin EmCom continues to lead with excellence in innovation, training, and community outreach

### **Emergency Support Services (ESS):**

ESS remains steadfast in enhancing District preparedness through diversifying and expanding our emergency inventory. Our meticulous approach includes crafting local guidelines to align with provincial protocols, welcoming new volunteers, and conducting comprehensive inventory audits. In 2023, we responded to three Level 1 emergencies and participated in area exercises, underscoring our commitment to readiness. Looking forward, our goals for 2024 include expanding group lodging capabilities and recruiting additional volunteers to bolster our response capacity. We eagerly anticipate presenting our new emergency notification program, ALERTABLE, and advancing with the provincial Evacuee Registration Assistance tool, alongside other exciting initiatives.

#### **Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (PODS):**

Our PODS continues to thrive as a robust network of communication, support, and collaboration. Hosting over 50 attendees at our annual POD leader Meet and Greet exemplifies our community engagement. By forging connections with programs such as FireSmart and the Fire Department, we amplify our impact on emergency preparedness throughout the community.

### Metchosin Search and Rescue (MSAR):

MSAR had a busy year in 2023. We provide Search and Rescue services in Metchosin, Langford, Colwood, Highlands, View Royal, Esquimalt, Victoria and Oak Bay. Over the 2023 year MSAR received 35 calls, including mutual aid requests from neighbouring teams on southern Vancouver Island and one call to support a search on the mainland. Call outs within our own search area ranged from various injuries, subjects becoming lost, and calls for people with dementia. In 2023, we also welcomed eight new members, with seven Members in Training (MITs) successfully completing the Ground Search and Rescue course.

Our goals for 2024 include welcoming and training a new group of MITs to successfully complete the 96-hour GSAR course. We also hope to purchase a new vehicle to replace our aging Rescue 8.

Our efforts in 2023 have been marked by innovation, collaboration, and resilience. With steadfast dedication and support from volunteers, stakeholders, and provincial grants, we are well-positioned to navigate future challenges and continue safeguarding our community in times of crisis.

Our efforts in 2023 have been marked by innovation, collaboration, and resilience



## **Policing**

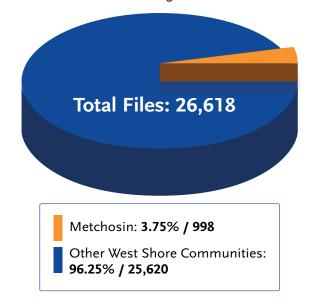
Police protection is provided by the West Shore RCMP Detachment and is now funded by the District of Metchosin through a Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA) with the Province of BC.

The West Shore RCMP reports to five municipalities including the City of Langford, the City of Colwood, the Town of View Royal, and the Districts of Highlands and Metchosin. The Department also provides Policing to the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.

The following provides overview of police reports in Metchosin from January 1st through December 31st, 2022 & 2023.

There were 998 reports in 2023, representing a 30.63% increase in reports compared to 2022 when there were 764 reports¹. The pie chart opposite depicts the percentage of files in Metchosin in comparison to other West Shore Communities in 2023. 3.75% of files were in Metchosin.

Figure 1 – 2023 Metchosin & Other West Shore Communities File Percentage



#### Founded & Unfounded Occurrences

Founded occurrences include offences where it has been determined that the reported incident did occur or was attempted, or there was no credible evidence to confirm that the incident did not take place. Unfounded occurrences are those occurrences that are investigated, but determined to not have been attempted or to have occurred. In 2023, there were 741 founded occurrences in Metchosin and 16 unfounded occurrences. Founded occurrences represented 74% of files and unfounded represented 2% of files (figure 2).

#### Assistance, Prevention & Information Files

Assistance, prevention and information files may include those files where officers act under the authority of other agencies (e.g., Provincial Mental Health Act, Coroners Act, etc.), assist other police and government agencies (e.g., curfew / compliance checks for probation / parole, etc.) and implement preventative measures to pro-actively target a specific concern (e.g., traffic enforcement in a school zone, etc.). In 2023, there were 241 of these occurrences (24%) in Metchosin (figure 2).

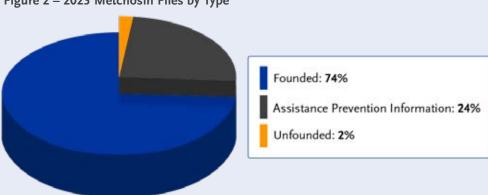


Figure 2 – 2023 Metchosin Files by Type

#### **Violent Crime**

There were 38 founded violent crimes in Metchosin in 2023, representing 3% of founded violent crimes in West Shore jurisdiction (figure 3) and a 35.71% increase compared to 2022 when there were 28 founded violent crimes.

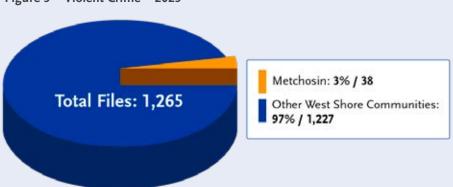
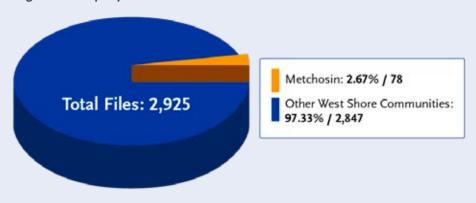


Figure 3 - Violent Crime - 2023

### **Property Crime**

There were 78 founded property crimes in Metchosin in 2023, representing 2.67% of founded property crimes in West Shore jurisdiction (figure 4) and a 32.2% increase compared to 2022 when there were 59 founded property crimes.

Figure 4 - Property Crime - 2023

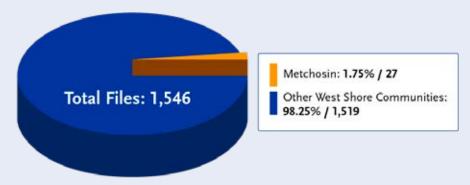


### **Other Criminal Code**

Other Criminal Code violations includes, but is not limited to, violations such as indecent acts / exposing, weapons possession, child pornography related offences, trespass at night, breaches, obstruction of justice, possession of break & enter instruments, counterfeiting currency, etc.

In 2023 there were 27 founded Other Criminal Code violations in Metchosin, representing 1.75% of founded violations in West Shore jurisdiction (figure 5). There was a 58.82% increase in founded violations in 2023 compared to 2022 when there were 17 founded violations.

Figure 5 - Other Criminal Code - 2023



## Founded Occurrences – Increases & Decreases

Table 1 depicts the 2022 and 2023 founded occurrences, the percent change and file count.

Uniformed Crime Report – RCMP Occurrence Classification	2022	2023	% Change	File Count (+/-)
215 Alcohol - 24 Hour	0	2	100%	2
215 Alcohol - 3 Day	1	3	200%	2
215 Drug	1	2	100%	1
911 - False / Abandoned Calls	26	19	-27%	-7
Abandoned Vehicles	5	3	-40%	-2
Animal Calls	26	15	-42%	-11
Assault - Aggravated	O	1	100%	1
Assault - Common	11	15	36%	4
Assault With Weapon Causing Bodily Harm	2	2	0%	0
Break & Enter - Business	О	1	100%	1
Break & Enter - Other	0	3	100%	3
Break & Enter - Residence	1	2	100%	1
Breach / Bail Violation	2	7	250%	5
Breach of Peace	6	0	-100%	-6
Breach Probation - Adult	О	3	100%	3
Bylaw - Litter	1	2	100%	1
Bylaw - Noise	21	29	38%	8
Bylaw - Other	6	5	-17%	-1
Cannabis Control & Licensing Act	0	2	100%	2
Cannabis Act - Other	0	1	100%	1
Causing a Disturbance	2	1	-50%	-1
Check Well Being	32	52	63%	20
Child Pornography - Possess / Access	2	1	-50%	-1
Collision Damage Over \$10,000	9	16	78%	7
Collision Damage Under \$10,000	21	26	24%	5
Collision - Fatal	О	О	0%	0
Collision Damage (Injury - Non-Fatal)	9	14	56%	5
Criminal Harassment	1	1	0%	0
Drive Without Care / Consideration	1	2	100%	1

Uniformed Crime Report – RCMP Occurrence Classification	2022	2023	% Change	File Count (+/-)
Drive While Disqualified / Suspended	5	7	40%	2
Driver Permit Recoveries - Provincial	0	1	100%	1
Duty to Warn	1	0	-100%	-1
Escape Custody	0	1	100%	1
Extortion	1	1	0%	0
Fail to Provide Animal With Care	0	1	100%	1
Fail to Stop / Remain	2	3	50%	1
Fail / Refuse Alcohol Demand	1	0	-100%	-1
False Alarms	21	50	138%	29
Firearms - Careless Use	0	2	100%	2
Flight From Peace Officer	0	2	100%	2
Fraud - Money / Property / Security Over \$5,000	4	9	125%	5
Fraud - Money / Property / Security Under \$5,000	10	6	-40%	-4
Fraud - Other	1	5	400%	4
Harassing Communications	2	6	200%	4
Impaired Operation Motor Vehicle (Alcohol)	7	10	43%	3
Impaired Operation Motor Vehicle (Drug)	0	2	100%	2
Indecent Acts / Exposing	3	2	-33%	-1
Insecure Premises	0	1	100%	1
Invitation to Sexual Touching	0	1	100%	1
Liquor Control & Licensing Act - Other	1	0	-100%	-1
Liquor - Intoxication in Public	1	1	0%	0
Lure Child Via Computer	0	1	100%	1
Mischief - \$5,000 or Under	10	19	90%	9
Mischief - Loss of Enjoyment Property	4	2	-50%	-2
Mischief - Over \$5,000	1	0	-100%	-1
Missing Persons	4	9	125%	5
Obstruct Peace Officer	1	0	-100%	-1
Other Provincial Statute - Non-Traffic	1	0	-100%	-1
Parking Violations	1	2	100%	1
Peace Bonds	1	1	0%	0
Possess Cannabis to Sell	0	1	100%	1

Uniformed Crime Report – RCMP Occurrence Classification	2022	2023	% Change	File Count (+/-)
Possession of Property Obtained By Crime Over \$5,000	1	3	200%	2
Possession of Property Obtained By Crime Under \$5,000	О	1	100%	1
Possession - Fentanyl	1	О	-100%	-1
Possession - Other Schedule I Drugs / Substances	О	1	100%	1
Property - Found	7	17	143%	10
Property - Lost	27	26	-4%	-1
Provincial Prohibition / Suspension (Not 215)	О	2	100%	2
Public Mischief	0	1	100%	1
Sexual Interference	0	1	100%	1
Sexual Assault	1	2	100%	1
Shots Fired	3	7	133%	4
Stranded Person	0	1	100%	1
Suspicious Occurrences	46	91	98%	45
Theft From Motor Vehicle Under \$5,000	7	8	14%	1
Theft From Motor Vehicle Over \$5,000	1	О	-100%	-1
Theft of Vehicle	5	4	-20%	-1
Theft - Other Over \$5,000	4	3	-25%	-1
Theft - Other Under \$5,000	9	9	0%	0
Trespass Act	1	2	100%	1
Trespass At Night	2	1	-50%	-1
Traffic - Insurance Violation	7	10	43%	3
Traffic - Other Moving	133	127	-5%	-6
Traffic - Other Non-Moving	5	4	-20%	-1
Unspecified Assistance	25	34	36%	9
Uttering Threat - Property/Animal	1	3	200%	2
Uttering Threat - Person	9	7	-22%	-2
Voyeurism	1	O	-100%	-1
Private File (Scoring Unknown)	1	0	-100%	-1
Total	566	741	31%	175



Highlands, and the Town of View Royal.

WSPR is governed by the Societies' Board of Directors comprised of

WSPR is governed by the Societies' Board of Directors comprised of representatives from the member municipalities. Each municipality provides financial support towards the operation of the facilities through an annual tax requisition.

The following section highlights various programs and initiatives offered by WSPR in 2023.

## 2023 Highlights

#### **Youth Programming**

The Shore, WSPR's expanded drop-in youth space launched in 2023. The Shore is the ultimate haven for youth ages 11-18 in the Westshore. This vibrant hub is not just a place; it is a community within a community where impressive young minds will find a safe place to kick back, hang out and just be themselves. Drop-in activities including swimming, skating, games, art, snacks, and more are offered every Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Each municipality provides financial support towards the operation of the facilities through an annual tax requisition

#### **MVYou Program**

WSPR launched the 'Most Valuable You' Recognition Program to recognize the outstanding efforts of staff who embody the values of the organization and work hard to make it a positive place for the community. It is a celebration of those who step in when needed, demonstrate a willingness to make WSPR a better place and grow into the challenges that arise. Approximately 60 staff were recognized and awarded a special MVYou tumbler.

#### Cardio/WR Equipment Replacement

The weightroom at WSPR was refreshed with new cardio equipment including Matrix treadmills, ellipticals, stationary bikes, rowing machines, step mills, Nusteps, and Keiser M3i indoor cycling bikes. The space was also reconfigured to provide more open floor space and improved accessibility.

#### **Thrifty Foods Skate Park Grand Opening**

The Thrifty Foods Skatepark in the JDF lower park officially opened in May, 2023. After so much anticipation and teamwork to bring this valuable amenity to fruition, an energetic crowd of community members attended the grand opening, as well as supporters and contributors of the project.

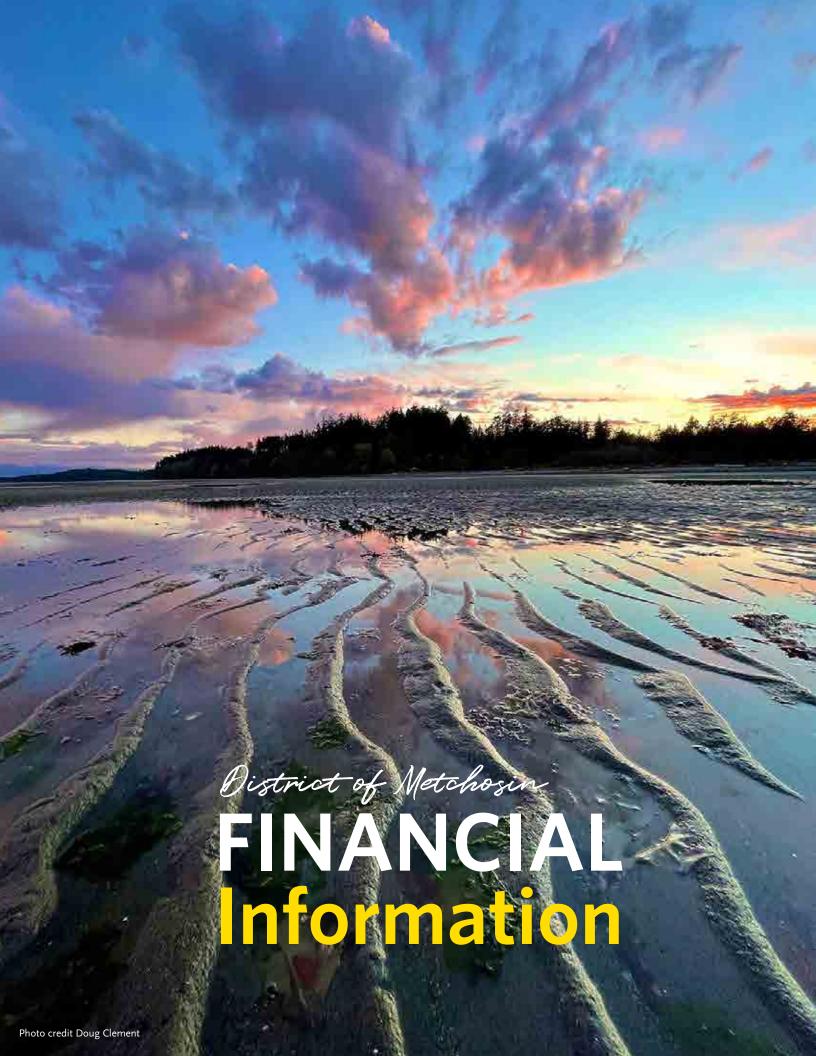
#### "Food Sense" healthy cooking on a budget program with "Thrive"

The youth food sense program kicked off a six-week program in partnership with the Thrive Social Services Society. The program was full, with eight youth putting new skills to work in planning and creating their own delicious meals. Participants went home with leftovers and new knowledge of nutrition, basic cooking skills, and safety in the kitchen.

For more information on WSPR, please visit www.westshorerecreation.ca

## **Library Services**

The District of Metchosin is a member of the Greater Victoria Public Library Board which provides library services to Metchosin residents primarily through the Juan de Fuca (JDF) Library Branch. Metchosin is a co-owner of the JDF Library Branch building along with the City of Colwood, City of Langford and the District of Highlands. The JDF Library Branch is the largest of the three West Shore GVPL Branches and offers a variety of general interest programs for all ages.



# **2023 Permissive Tax Exemptions**

In accordance with section 98(2)(b) of the *Community Charter*, the following properties in the District of Metchosin were provided permissive tax exemptions (*Heritage Tax Exemption Bylaw 2023, No. 688* and *General Tax Exemption Bylaw 2023, No. 689*).

Civic Address	Legal Description	Exemption Value
Anglican Synod Diocese of BC 4354 Metchosin Road	Plan 197R, Section 1, Metchosin District	\$5,433.64
Metchosin Hall Society 4401 William Head Road	That part of Section 2, Metchosin District, marked "Hall Site" on Plan 1184, and containing one-half of an acre more or less	\$2,502.25
BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Wild Arc, 1020 Malloch Road	Lot 3, Plan 31510, Section 30, Metchosin Land District	\$8,900.86
YMCA-YWCA Greater Victoria, Y Camp Thunderbird	Section 54, Goldstream Land District; Section 55, Goldstream Land District, Lease No. 19055; Section 56, Goldstream Land District; Section 57, Goldstream Land District; Section 62, Goldstream Land District, that part of Section 62 lying west of a line joining the S.E. corner of Section 56, Goldstream District with the N.E. corner of Section 57, Sooke District, Lease No. 13969	\$54,794.30
Victoria Motorcycle Club, Boulderpath Road	Section 119, Land District 30, Boulderpath Road	\$2,568.64
Victoria Motorcycle Club	Lot A, Section 13, Plan 21261, Land District 30, Happy Valley Road	\$2,136.39
Anglican Synod of the Diocese of British Columbia 4125 Metchosin Road	Lot A, Plan 42074, Section 1, Metchosin District	\$6,667.89
Total Exemptions		\$83,003.97

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